



Speaking
of Wine

CHAPTER 4

COMMUNICATION & MARKETING IN ENGLISH

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



In every situation in life or in a working environment communication is key. It doesn't matter whether you are just doing a vineyard tour to help out or if it's your full-time job; if you are a waiter in a restaurant or the head sommelier or chef; if you're organising an activity Communication is crucial.

In these recent months communication has become an even bigger part of everyday life. We spend on average an extra 2 hours per day on the internet (social media taking up most part of that time). Think about the last advertisements you saw on the internet... How did they look? Were they video or text format?

Whatever the moment, communication skills and good marketing in English will always be useful and important to your job and/or business.

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal communication is the transmission of signals and instructions through eye contact, body posture, facial expressions, hand gestures - anything that does not involve using words.

Some experts today say that non-verbal communication is more important than words themselves. There is that famous saying "a picture can paint a thousand words" - how true is that?

HAND GESTURES

Imagine you are explaining a product or service, or even doing a tour of the vineyard in English (and it's not your native language). English-speakers will pay attention to your hand gestures - try and keep them to a sensible minimum so you don't distract people from what you are saying.

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

I know - wearing a mask doesn't help when talking to customers! But eventually (one day!) we will be allowed to take them off inside and outside and people will be able to see our pretty faces again.

Smile and make people feel welcome with your face before you open your mouth!

EYE-CONTACT

This is even more important nowadays than ever when wearing a mask. If people can't physically see your smile, they will be able to see your eyes and understand what you want to say.

Making eye-contact with all of the members in the group is a good way to make people feel comfortable and make them feel like you are talking to them directly.

BODY POSTURE

If you stand with your arms folded, people will assume you are being defensive or are unhappy or cross about something.

If you fidget and can't stand still people will find it distracting and won't pay attention to what you are saying. They may think that you aren't confident enough and don't know what you are talking about.

If you don't move at all people will assume you are nervous and haven't got any experience in what you are doing.

Body posture is SO important. It can make or break your discussion. Be aware of how you move and make some adjustments if you need to.

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



VERBAL COMMUNICATION

"Words, don't come easy to me" F.R. David got it right on the first line of the song! And it's true, not everyone can find the right words for the right moment. We have to practice (in any language) being fluent and eloquent with what we say.

Take a good look at the customer in front of you and analyse them before you start speaking.

Who are they?

Where are they from?

What are they expecting from you?

Are they a professional customer or final consumer?

What do they know about your products/wines/services?

I'm not saying you should judge a book by its cover. Obviously your initial analysis of the situation and group may have to change as you start talking.

What I really want is for you to think about the sort of language you are going to use in each situation.

REMEMBER: it's not the same talking to your friends or colleagues as the person who is potentially going to buy from you.

3 tips for communicating well in English:

1- If you feel like your language skills are a bit rusty or not up to scratch, apologise first! Make people aware of the fact that you are going to try really hard to talk to them in English but that you may make some mistakes. This also works as an ice-breaker to start a conversation with people.

2- Breathe! Use short sentences and make sure you breathe properly in between. There is nothing worse than not being able to breathe in the middle of a sentence in front of your customers!

3- Talk slowly. Don't rush and take your time. People will listen to you and find it easier to understand if you talk slowly and carefully.

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



ON THE PHONE

Talking on the phone can be difficult in most situations but when the language isn't native or you can't hear people properly it makes things even worse.

DID YOU KNOW...

65% of people actually admit to being shy when talking on the phone?

Here is a quick guide to some phrases in English you can use on the phone to help the conversation flow:

I find it most annoying when I ring a business and they answer the phone with a simple "hello?" It doesn't take much to say, "Hello, Speaking of Wine here. How can I help you?"

Hello, good morning (or afternoon, or evening)

(...your name...) speaking.

How can I help you?

Then come the basic questions related to whatever it is that you are selling...

Information about the product/tour/wine/service

Times and prices

Extra useful information

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Ok, this is where communication starts getting a little more complicated. Everyone has their own style of writing and ways of expressing things - BUT in English, the way things are written are VERY IMPORTANT!

In a survey conducted in 2019 in vineyards in Rioja and Andalucía, 500 international tourists were asked the same questions:

Did you contact the vineyard by phone or by email to make your reservation?

85% of people said they used email to make contact and book a tour at the vineyard before arriving.

How many vineyards did you contact before making a decision on which one to visit?

63% of people said that they had contacted more than 3 vineyards before they made a choice about which one to visit.

What was the determining factor on choosing one?

- Price - 35%
- Availability - 24%
- Options - 12%
- Location - 8%
- Flexibility - 4%
- Language - 17%

In the emails you received with information, how clear was it to understand? Did they answer all your questions?

- Very clear - 27%
- More or less - 52%
- Very confusing - 21%

- Yes - 10%
- No - 30%
- Some of them - 60%

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



So as you can see, of all the people who were surveyed 85% of them contacted the vineyard by email to make a reservation. That means that how we write emails to people is going to have a big impact on whether or not we win them over as a customer.

In a separate document you will find several email templates in English that you can use for answering your customers. All you have to do is copy and paste and fill in the blanks with your own information. Use them for all your emails at the beginning and then write your own based on what you know and anticipate what people will ask you.

WRITING EMAILS IN ENGLISH

Points to remember when writing emails in English:

- **BEGINNING**

The beginning of the email has to be polite, straight to the point and has to get people's attention. If they read the beginning and it doesn't resonate with them, they more than likely will skip through the email without reading it properly.

- **MIDDLE**

This is where you need to be writing all of the important information. Make sure it's clear, concise, to the point and follows a logical order that your customer will understand.

- **END**

The end of the email is also very important - if you need more information from the customer make sure you write (or rewrite) those questions here or leave the end open for further discussion. Don't make it too long and keep it polite.

Now that you know how to write emails - or at least have the theory, let's have a look at some examples...

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



EXAMPLES OF WRITTEN EMAILS IN ENGLISH

As an experiment, we sent out an email to various different vineyards all over the country. The aim of the experiment was to test the level of written English of people working in wine tourism.

Below is the original email that was sent:

Good morning,

This summer we are looking to travel to your area with a group of 4 friends (6 people in total). We would like some information on the different tours and tastings that you have available.

What are your opening times during the last week of July?

Do you have a tasting room that is open all day, or do we have to book?

How much are the guided tours and how long do they last? Are they available in English?

Are there different options for the tour?

Do you have a restaurant or is there an option of a tour with food? One of our friends is Celiac - would it be possible to provide an alternative if there is food?

Can we buy wine directly from you?

Thank you so much for your help!

Look forward to hearing from you.

Heidi Smith

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



The replies were very varied and in some cases, we never heard anything back!

REMEMBER: it is free to send emails and it shouldn't be a time consuming job! Afterall, if you want the business, you'll have to answer the questions and give information to your potential customers to make them want to buy from you.

EXAMPLE 1

Thanks for your interest in our vineyard!

We do tours and Tasting daily but always with Booking in advance (tastings too) in our website you can find all the information and options as we are not a restaurant there are few options with food.

So once you know which tour do you want to do and the day we can check our available slots in English.

Best regards,

This reply is short and sweet, HOWEVER I find it good to always assume that the customer has already read my website and they have more questions - that's why they are sending me an email.

NOTE: in English we say "ON the website" not in

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



EXAMPLE 2

Good morning,

This is (name) from (vineyard). First of all thank you for being interested in visiting our vineyard.

In our case, we're doing visits in our vineyard during all the year. I'm glad to explain you what our visits consist of:

Firstly, we make a personal visit to the vineyard while explain the project and wines, and then we offer you a wine tasting with a bit of catalan cheese and bread. Generally it takes 1'30 hours and the prices are 15€ / person, and you can do it in English.

We are also offering lunch in the vineyard after the visit and tasting. The price is (15€/visit+tasting and 25€/lunch), so in total 40€/person. We also have gluten free options for your celiac friend, in this case the supplement will be 5€.

We recommend to pay by cash because of the fact that the cover in the vineyard is not that high.

Furthermore, you can also buy wine after the visit.

We'd love to offer you a perfect service so we are also subject to the weather, hope the day you decide to come make a good day.

During the last week of July we are fully able at moment. Is necessary book first so please let us know which day of the week is better for you to come:

- 27, 28 or 29 of July, at 11:30 am.

Once you confirm the visit and the day, we can send you the exact location.

Please confirm this mail and writing when is better for you and give us one name and telephone number.

Thank you and see you very soon,

Firstly, the beginning of this email is perfect - thank you for your interest in our vineyard.

NOTES: it's best to say, "we do a personalised, guided tour of the vineyards where we explain the project and the different wines we produce"

"cobertura de móvil" - network coverage or cell phone reception

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



DESCRIBING YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES IN ENGLISH

I just want to make one thing clear before I go on about how to describe your products and services in English...

DO NOT USE GOOGLE TRANSLATE!

If you don't know how to put it, if you are really stuck on a certain translation... email me! I really find it hard to read certain descriptions when it's so obviously been translated with an online translator.

Don't get me wrong, Google works but you have to know how to manipulate it to get the results you really want. Be careful!

Ok, rant over. Now let's get to business...

There are many different techniques for writing the descriptions of products and services - research them, investigate and find one that suits your writing style (in whatever language!)

- **AIWA** (attention, interest, want, action)
- **PAS** (problem, agitate, solution)
- **BAB** (before, after, bridge)
- **PASTOR** (problem, amplify, story and solution, transformation and testimony, offer, response)
- **4 U's** (useful, unique, urgent and ultra specific)

CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



The main 9 factors of marketing copy are:

1- Know who your audience is. The same as in the previous chapter on wine tasting when we talked about describing wines to certain customers, your products and services are going to have different target audiences too. Keep this in mind when you write the descriptions.

2- Focus on the benefits or the biggest differences compared to other similar services or products. For example, if you use a certain of winemaking or the events you organise are unique in different ways, use these PODS (points of difference) to sell to your customers.

3- Tell the full story. Explain exactly what is involved, don't leave out any details (however small or insignificant you may think they are).

4- Use a natural language and tone when writing. This helps people understand and relate better to what you are selling.

5- Power words. Using certain words like unforgettable, unimaginable, spectacular, breathtaking, etc. can help make a sale.

For example, these 2 sentences are exactly the same but one uses power words and the other doesn't:

The tour of the vineyard ends at the top of the hill with views of the sea and the mountains combined.

The tour of the vineyard ends at the top of the hill with breathtaking views of the spectacular countryside where the mountains melt into the sea.

6- Use short sentences and make the text easy to scan quickly.

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CHAPTER 4

Communication & MK



7- Make sure if the product is going to be on your website that you include certain key words that are related to your business to allow the best optimisation on search engines.

8- Make sure that the images you include add good quality and are yours! There are thousands of stock images you can use for free off the internet, but do you really want someone else having the same image as you? My advice? Invest in photography and in brand imagery as soon as possible.

9- Have a clear CTA (Call To Action) in your description. What do you want people to do after reading? Book a tour? Make a phone call? Write you an email? Use the contact form? Sign up for a newsletter? Book a table? Buy your product? Make sure the customer knows what to do next with simple descriptions and a clear CTA.

I know that writing product descriptions is hard and getting it right in a language that isn't yours is even worse. That's why I offer a service that is product translation and product reviews in English (Spanish and Catalan).

Outsource to professionals who can help you write your product and service descriptions correctly!



Speaking of Wine

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